

## Iron Ore Creek (0202K) Recreational Use Attainability Analysis Summary and Recommendation

A recreational use attainability analysis (RUAA) was conducted on Iron Ore Creek (0202K) in the summer of 2014 to determine the appropriate recreational use and numeric criteria. Iron Ore Creek is an unclassified intermittent water body that is approximately 19 miles in length. The creek is located in Grayson County. It was identified in the 2014 Texas Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List of Impaired Water Bodies due to elevated bacteria levels. It was initially listed in 2010.

The RUAA identified that the presumed use of primary contact recreation (PCR) for Iron Ore Creek should be revised to secondary contact recreation 1 (SCR 1). SCR applies to water bodies where water recreation can occur, but the nature of the recreation does not involve a significant risk of ingestion. SCR 1 applies to intermittent and perennial freshwaters where site-specific information demonstrates that primary contact recreation has little to no likelihood of occurring due to physical characteristics of the water body such as shallow depths or lack of pools.

During the field surveys, field staff did not observe any type of recreation occurring on the stream. Interviews with stakeholders and landowners indicated that they have never personally used or witnessed PCR on the stream. One interview indicated that fishing has been observed on the creek. Another interviewee stated that they had heard of boating on the creek. At the time of the second survey, the study area was experiencing moderate drought conditions which resulted in dry stream beds at three of the ten study sites. Iron Ore Creek had an average thalweg of 0.25 meters (9.84 in) and seven pools deeper than 1 meter. Stream flow was normal at most sites during the first survey, but no flow to dry conditions were encountered during the second survey. Public access is available at all survey sites via bridge crossings; there are no public parks on the creek. Access into the stream is overall difficult due to steep banks and dense vegetation.

Naturally low water levels decrease the likelihood of PCR use. Iron Ore Creek has a shallow average depth, supporting reclassification to SCR1. In accordance with §307.4 (j)(3)(C) of the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards, the TCEQ recommends a reclassification from PCR to SCR1 with the corresponding geometric mean of 630 colonies *E. coli*/100mL for all of Iron Ore Creek, from the confluence of Choctaw Creek upstream to the headwater south of FM 120 west of Denison. This reclassification is appropriate due to “natural, ephemeral, intermittent low flow conditions or water levels” in accordance with reasons specified in 40 CFR §131.10(g)(2).

Prior to changing the currently assigned recreational use of Iron Ore Creek in the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards, the TCEQ would provide additional public notice and opportunity for public comment. In addition, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency would review this proposed change under the provisions of the federal Clean Water Act.